Fidel Castro steps down after ruling Cuba for 49 years

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Wednesday, February 20, 2008

Palace exec says P.5M for Jun from his pocket



GMA takes 'solidarity walk' with her Cabinet

By Christine O. Avendaño



WALK THE TALK

Bishop urges people power

'Other probes meant to kill Senate inquiry'

By TJ Burgonio



Lagdameo: It's for truth and to end corruption

By Beverly T. Natividad

THE HEAD OF AN INFLUENTIAL GROUP OF ROMAN Catholic bishops yesterday raised the possibility of a new brand of "people power" that would spur people to bring out the truth and end corruption that had kept the country hostage to the "greed of powerholders."

New mystery witness has more 'damning' testimony

By TJ Burgonio and Dona Pazzibugan

Trillanes may finally set foot in the Senate

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

A first: US envoy visits MILF camp

By Edwin Fernandez
Inquirer Mindanao



WHERE ANGELS FEAR TO TREAD

SC orders stop to 'frivolous' vote recount

By Leila B. Salaverria and Tarra Quismundo
Inquirer Central Luzon

Second FRONTPAGE

₱14,003,726.40

Puno rejects council top post

Chief justice says he can't head JDV's 'moral revolution'

CHIEF JUSTICE REYNATO PUNO HAS DECLINED to head the recently launched Council for Moral Revolution because of the sensitivity of his position.

Ex-speaker seeks probe of House ballot box burglary

House burglars strike again

SC junks Loren's protest with finality

A Time to Reflect – Let us not be distracted.

LET US FOCUS ON THE NEEDS OF THE POOR.

The ZTE National Broadband (NBN) corruption scandal has created a major crisis that is beginning to hurt the country and our people, especially the poor.

1. It has shaken up the people's faith in their government, and may severely affect the Arroyo administration's effectiveness to lead the country.
2. It is ***sending the wrong signals to investors, both local and foreign. They are now in a wait- and- see mode, holding back much needed job-generating investments until the issue is resolved.***
3. It will reverse, if not wipe out some of the notable gains in the economic front.

BUT ALL IS NOT LOST, IF...

1. The Arroyo administration, with clear instructions from the President, brings a credible closure to the scandal thru a fair, impartial and transparent investigation ***AFTER WHICH CHARGES ARE FILED, AND THE GUILTY PARTIES PUNISHED, NO MATTER WHO THEY ARE.***
2. The Arroyo administration should ***IMMEDIATELY ADDRESS THE URGENT NEED FOR SAFETY NETS FOR THE POOREST OF THE POOR*** so that ***basic services are readily made available to them: basic food commodities, cheap electricity, LPG, and reasonable transportation costs.***

ALL THESE WILL NOT COST MUCH PROVIDED THERE IS FOCUS, TRANSPARENCY, EFFICIENT IMPLEMENTATION, AND YES, LESS GRAFT.

IN THIS REGARD, GOVERNMENT AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR CAN JOIN HANDS TO REFINE AND IMPLEMENT A DOABLE SUBSIDY SYSTEM

1. A ***valid voter's ID can serve as the rationing coupon and will validate a person who qualifies for subsidy.*** The **VOTER'S ID** has the bearer's name, address and barangay. At the same time, and equally important, this will allow us to ***clean the voters' list in preparation for the forthcoming 2010 election.***
2. The Departments of Trade and Industry, Energy and Social Welfare and Development can coordinate with ***NGOs, religious groups, business organizations and Consumer Sector – COPW in working out the details.***

IN THE LIGHT OF THE COPW POSITION AGAINST THE SUSPENSION OF THE 12% VAT ON CRUDE OIL AND THAT FINISHED FUEL PRODUCTS BE ZERO- RATED FOR 6 MONTHS –

- The Consumer Sector appeals to Congress to consider increasing the budget of the DSWD to ***SUBSIDIZE THE SAFETY NETS FOR THE POOREST OF THE POOR.***

The Consumer Sector-COPW and Business Organizations will work in tandem with the BOC-BIR for PROACTIVE measures to address ***UNDERVALUATION, MISCLASSIFICATION AND OUTRIGHT SMUGGLING.***

COPW will work closely with the Department of Energy, Department of Finance, the Senate and the House, and the Executive Branch for the adoption and implementation of necessary measures that will ensure ***TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY*** at all times.

The COPW also seeks the following urgent measures:

- Expand the Meralco electricity subsidy to ***households which consume no more than 200 KWH per month, from the present ceiling of 100 KWH.***
- One 11 KG LPG tank ***per family per month*** must be made available to ***depressed areas in Metro Manila.***
- With oil hitting $91 per barrel, there is ***need to fast-track the development of cheap compressed natural gas (CNG) as an alternative fuel source.*** Our neighboring countries are ahead of us in the development and use of alternative fuel sources.
- The Department of Energy must accelerate the program to shift to CNG for buses, freight trucks, and jeepneys in Metro Manila. CNG costs ***ONLY P14.52 per liter compared to DIESEL at P37.36 per liter.*** The **SAVINGS** of ***P22.84 per liter is equivalent to P4,568 a day*** for a city bus running 200 kms a day.
- ***Extend DTI financing to the transport sector for the acquisition of new or second-hand CNG buses from abroad.*** The acquisition of CNG buses will ***re-fleet and upgrade the present public utility system.***

For online posting of COPW issues, log on to http://groups.yahoo.com/group/COPW/

COPW
CONSUMER & OIL PRICE WATCH
Serving and Protecting the Filipino Consumer
Direct Line 844-8785; Fax: 818-5203 • E-mail: copw@ctt.com.ph

RAUL T. CONCEPCION
Chairman

We will appreciate getting feedback from you.
Text 0917-8103363 if you agree or have any comments on the COPW position. Thank you.

OFWs in HK appeal for 50 Pinoys in Kuwait

A HONG KONG-BASED MIGRANT WORKers group yesterday appealed to the government to do something about 50 Filipino laborers reduced to scavenging garbage in Kuwait after being duped by their employer.

The overseas Filipino workers, according to the Asia Pacific Migrants Mission, have resorted to eating expired foodstuff and scavenging edible items from waste bins just to survive.

APMM said it was appalled by the conditions of the OFWs, who were employed by the Gulf Link Transport Co. but subcontracted to different employers as cleaners.

"They have been in Kuwait for three months and a number of them have either not been paid or their salaries have been delayed. Their placement agency is (ironically named Great Provider Service Exporters Inc.," APMM coordinator Cil Estrada said in a statement from Hong Kong.

For those who do get paid, their salaries are reduced from 60 Kuwaiti dinars (about US$220.00) to only 44 (US$161.70) a month because of illegal deductions. "That's lower than the monthly wage of a domestic helper here," Estrada added.

Last Saturday, Migrante-Dubai accompanied to the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) more than 40 other victims of labor contract violations in Dubai. *Jerome Aning*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, February 20, 2008
2nd Week of Lent

1st Reading: Jer 18:18-20
Gospel: Mt 20:17-28

[illegible]

Commentary

[illegible]

Castro quotes

SOME OF FIDEL CASTRO'S MORE memorable quotes: [illegible]

Reuters

Fidel Castro steps down

From page A1

[illegible] he said.

The announcement effectively ends his rule, [illegible]

Standing up to America

[illegible]

Like a rock star

[illegible]

Simply 'Fidel'

[illegible]

Reports from Reuters and AP

Cebu Pacific gets new short-haul plane

Corrections

Bishop urges people power

Who's who

Not just talking

GMA puts on hold 11 projects worth more than ₱100B

Use local funds

Cop charges Lozada wife with perjury

GMA takes 'solidarity walk' with her Cabinet

Cabinet support

Fellowship dinner

Security briefing

Feeling of confidence

Protest only in Metro Manila

Upbeat

New mystery witness has more 'damning' testimony

Palace executive Gaite says ₱.5M for Jun from his pocket

Unfortunate

'Was he just baiting me?'

Sanctuary fund

Faeldon faces Nov. 29 raps

A DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE panel has recommended the filing of rebellion charges against fugitive Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon in connection with the Nov. 29 siege of the Peninsula Manila hotel in Makati City.

The DOJ panel also recommended the dropping of the rebellion complaints the police filed against 24 civilians implicated in the incident for lack of evidence.

The civilians ordered cleared were El Cid Fajardo, Herman Laurel, Leonido Tolledo Jr., Evangeline Mendoza, Jose Albert, [illegible], Ferdinand [illegible], Julio Anchesa, [illegible], Maurice [illegible], Renato Dadas, [illegible], Edgardo Nalaboy and Roy Linsao.

In a Jan. 30 resolution, the panel said Faeldon, who was able to slip past the police that had surrounded the Peninsula Manila, should face a criminal charge because he actively took part in the hotel takeover by renegade soldiers who called on the President to step down.

"[Faeldon's] complicity in the conspiracy to overthrow the government is clear and his overt acts manifest a concerted plan," the panel said.

The panel said Faeldon's participation in the uprising was clear from the start. He had joined military and former military officials in walking out of the Makati courtroom where a coup d'etat hearing in connection with the July 2003 Oakwood mutiny was being held.

Leila B. Salaverria

20/20: Looking Ahead

PBSP Philippine Business for Social Progress

February 20, 2008 Casino Español de Cebu, Cebu City

20th Visayas Annual Membership Meeting

Poverty Reduction in the Visayas

20 Years At A Glance:

- Number of projects: 1,279
- Total financial assistance: Pesos 453 million
- Households reached: 41,000

After 20 years, PBSP in the Visayas looks forward to another 20 years of helping people help themselves through service beyond self, service for others, and service for the greater good of all.

PBSP is business empowering and uplifting the lives of many Filipinos



MALACAÑAN PALACE
MANILA
MESSAGE



What's your CSR Story?

A Better Life:

Stories of Corporate Social Responsibility

A PBSP in the Visayas Coffee Table Book Project

Cebu Flower Pecker Sponsor

PhP 180,000

Cebu Black Shama Sponsor

PhP90,000

Cebu Flower Pecker Sponsors

aboitiz Group Foundation

PETRON Fuel Hope

TIMEX

Cebu Black Shama Sponsors

CEMEX

GREEN ARC

Plover sponsors

LANDBANK

Rhine

Event sponsors

CEBU DAILY NEWS

SAN MIGUEL CORPORATION

Patrons:

RP tiptoes around Kosovo independence

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE PHILIPPINES yesterday supported the unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo, a move backed by many Western countries, including the United States and Europe but bitterly opposed by Serbia and Russia. But the Philippines stopped short of recognizing Kosovo outright.

In a statement, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo said that while the Philippines did not oppose Kosovo's historic bid for statehood, it would prefer a settlement of the issue as embodied within both parties' obligation under UN Security Council Resolution 1244, taking into account the internationally accepted principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity.

The Philippines believes that a lasting solution, including that of independence, should be based on a negotiated solution mutually acceptable to all parties, Romulo said in a statement.

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), the country's largest Muslim separatist group, welcomed Kosovo's declaration and its recognition by the United States and some European states.

"The taboo has been shattered and no view can argue that secession or independence is not within the rule of the game in the United Nations," Eid Kabalu, the MILF's deputy spokesman, said in a statement posted on its web site.

But Kabalu said the MILF had no plans to declare Muslim-dominated areas in the southern Philippines independent. With a report from Reuters

‘Other probes meant to kill Senate inquiry’

A first: US . . .

Trillanes may finally set foot in the Senate

2 significant details

Warning

'Aberration'

Responsibility

SC orders . . .

'Frivolous' protest

Comelec order

Half a million votes

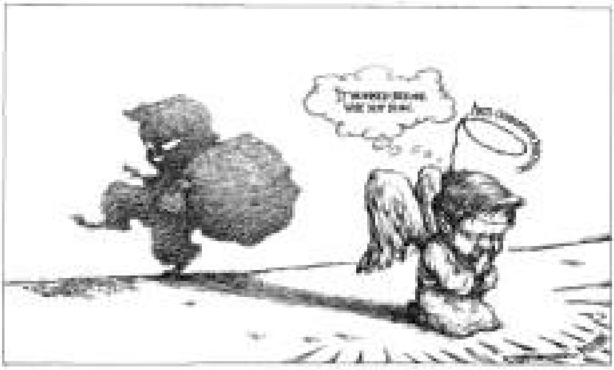
Be sober

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

Is it Neri next?

EDITORIAL



'GMA is evil'—Neri as quoted by Lozada

AS I SEE IT



Neal H. Cruz

Crossroads

THERE'S THE RUB



Conrado de Quiros

Coal expansion violates Kyoto commitment

COMMENTARY

Jasper Inventor

Mother tongue



PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

Reading Neri



AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

Restaurants and memories



LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

'When do we stop them from doing this to us?'

LETTERS

The joke is now on the Joker (Arroyo)

FVR's party is by invitation only

Philippine Academy of Rehabilitation Medicine

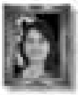
18th Annual Convention: Opening Global Horizons

February 21-24, 2008

Club Malarayat, Lipa City, Batangas

Vision

Mission











International Speakers



Randall L. Braddom, MD, MS
United States of America

Anthony B. Ward
United Kingdom









Scientific Program

Executive Board 2007-2008























Organizing Committee

Asian police experts tackle bio-terror

Across the NATION



A MOTORCYCLE rider is forced to drive through flooded streets in Legazpi City.

Freak weather displaces hundreds

FREAK WEATHER BROUGHT HEAVY RAINS AND flooding to some parts of Visayas and Luzon, killing several people and sending hundreds of villagers to rooftops as floodwaters rose.

Crop damages

Basketball court

Mindoro situation

Army arrests Indonesian terror suspect

Comelec junks Pacificador poll appeal

Antimining residents sue DENR-Vizcaya chief

[illegible]





TIME TO GO:

A CALL TO OUR COLLEAGUES IN GOVERNMENT

We are former government officials who have held high positions in the current and previous administrations. Having participated in the highest level of governance up close and personal, we now feel compelled to speak up for our demoralized public servants and arrest the decline of our institutions of governance. In the past, many of us kept quiet, going on about our daily chores, attending to business as usual.

However, over the last few days, we, together with the rest of the country, have seen one man - Jun Lozada - finally decide that he can no longer be part of the massive graft and corruption that permeates this government. His testimony exposed that the corruption in the project he dealt with – the NBN ZTE project – is standard in what he called "dysfunctional government procurement processes."

Clearly, what Jun Lozada knew so terrified the powers-that-be that they unwittingly exposed what Jun called "the dark side of the state" – state-sponsored terrorism that had been rearing its ugly head in the various disappearances and extra-judicial killings in the past six years – and which almost took him as a victim in a botched kidnapping that the administration has been trying, with little success, to cover up.

In a sense, all Jun Lozada did was to confirm what we already know. Our country is sliding into moral decadence. He also confirmed the systematic destruction of our democratic institutions and the systemic nature of our problems. We have seen this in the wanton disregard of checks-and-balances; abuse of the powers of the President; the cooptation through patronage and outright bribery of the other branches of government; politically sponsored corruption, facilitated, not thwarted, by bureaucratic procedures; the naked use of power and authority through the PNP, PSG, NAIA, among others, to strangle the truth, and the deployment of cabinet, sub-cabinet officials, and the military to obstruct justice and cover up illegal orders and acts.

In the past, for too many times that we were confronted with threats to our democracy and to our moral values, our response was: "What can we do about it? What is our choice? Who will lead us?"

These questions persist but, today, we can no longer stay silent. We can no longer ignore the reality of a government gone wild, wreaking havoc on our rights and institutions in a climate of impunity. We can no longer console ourselves in the strength of the peso, narrowing deficits, and an expanding economy. Even these ephemeral gains have not translated into a better life for the majority of our people, especially the poor.

The future of our country is at stake. Our democratic institutions are under attack. What we stand to lose is the moral fabric of our society.

We call on all government officials - Cabinet Secretaries, Undersecretaries, Heads of Agencies - who know about these anomalous transactions to join the heroic stand of Jun Lozada to come forward and speak out. We call on all those who know about the extrajudicial killings and disappearances to go public and tell the truth. We call on all those who can no longer endure this wrongful governance, with its structures of evil and unmoderated greed: **IT IS TIME TO CUT CLEAN! IT IS TIME TO GO!**

Tama na! Sobra na! Panahon na!

1. **Florencio Abad** *(Former Secretary, Department of Education)*
2. **Tomas Africa** *(Former Administrator, National Statistics Office)*
3. **Rafael Alunan III** *(Former Secretary, Department of Interior and Local Government)*
4. **Senen Bacani** *(Former Secretary, Department of Agriculture)*
5. **Angelito Banayo** *(Former Secretary, Political Affairs)*
6. **Romeo Bernardo** *(Former USec., Department of Finance)*
7. **Gerardo Bulatao** *(Former USec., Department of Agrarian Reform)*
8. **Clifford Burkley** *(Former USec., DSWD)*
9. **Ramon Cardenas** *(Former Head, Presidential Management Staff)*
10. **Jose Cuisia Jr.** *(Former Governor, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas)*
11. **[illegible] Campillo Jr.** *(Former USec., Department of Tourism)*
12. **Karina Constantino David** *(Former Chair, Civil Service Commission)*
13. **Elfren Cruz** *(Former Head, Presidential Management Staff)*
14. **Isagani Cruz** *(Former USec., Department of Education)*
15. **Teresita Quintos Deles** *(Former Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process)*
16. **Benjamin Diokno** *(Former Secretary, Department of Budget and Management)*
17. **Quintin Doromal Sr.** *(Former Commissioner, Philippine Commission on Good Government)*
18. **Franklin Drilon** *(Former Executive Secretary)*
19. **Narcisa Escaler** *(Former Ambassador to the United Nations)*
20. **Jesus Estanislao** *(Former Secretary, Department of Finance)*
21. **Fulgencio Factoran Jr.** *(Former Secretary, Department of Environment and Natural Resources)*
22. **Victoria Garchitorena** *(Former Head, Presidential Management Staff)*
23. **Ernesto Garilao** *(Former Secretary, Department of Agrarian Reform)*
24. **Peter Garrucho Jr.** *(Former Executive Secretary)*
25. **Jose Luis Gascon** *(Former USec., Department of Education)*
26. **Marietta Goco** *(Former Chair, Presidential Commission to Fight Poverty)*
27. **Jose Antonio Gonzalez** *(Former Secretary, Department of Tourism)*
28. **Milwida Guevarra** *(Former USec., Department of Finance)*
29. **Cielito Habito** *(Former Director General, NEDA)*
30. **Edilberto de Jesus Jr.** *(Former Secretary, Department of Education)*
31. **Philip Ella Juico** *(Former Secretary, Department of Agrarian Reform)*
32. **Antonio La Viña** *(Former USec., DENR)*
33. **Bienvenido Laguesma** *(Former Secretary, Department of Labor and Employment)*
34. **Lina Laigo** *(Former Secretary, DSWD)*
35. **Ernest Leung** *(Former Secretary, Department of Finance)*
36. **Josefina Lichauco** *(Former Secretary, Department of Transportation and Communications)*
37. **Narzalina Lim** *(Former Secretary, Department of Tourism)*
38. **Juan Miguel Luz** *(Former USec., Department of Education)*
39. **Felipe Medalla** *(Former Director General, NEDA)*
40. **Jose Molano Jr.** *(Former Executive Director, Commission on Filipinos Overseas)*
41. **Vitaliano Nañagas** *(Former Chair, Development Bank of the Philippines)*
42. **Imelda Nicolas** *(Former Lead Convenor, National Anti-Poverty Commission)*
43. **Roberto de Ocampo** *(Former Secretary, Department of Finance)*
44. **Oscar Orbos** *(Former Executive Secretary)*
45. **Ernesto Ordoñez** *(Former Secretary, Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects)*
46. **Victor Ordoñez** *(Former USec., Department of Education)*
47. **Cayetano Paderanga** *(Former Director General, NEDA)*
48. **Jose Pardo** *(Former Secretary, Department of Finance)*
49. **Vicente Paterno** *(Former Minister, Ministry of Trade)*
50. **Felicito Payumo** *(Former Chairman, Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority)*
51. **Pete Prado** *(Former Secretary, Department of Transportation and Communications)*
52. **Cesar Purisima** *(Former Secretary, Department of Finance)*
53. **Victor Ramos** *(Former Secretary, DENR)*
54. **Amina Rasul** *(Former Chair, National Youth Commission)*
55. **Albert del Rosario** *(Former Ambassador to the United States of America)*
56. **Francisco del Rosario** *(Former Chair, Development Bank of the Philippines)*
57. **Ramon del Rosario Jr.** *(Former Secretary, Department of Finance)*
58. **Melito Salazar** *(Former Member of the Monetary Board, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas)*
59. **Leticia Ramos Shahani** *(Former USec., Department of Foreign Affairs)*
60. **Cesar Sarino** *(Former Secretary, Department of Interior and Local Government)*
61. **Juan Santos** *(Former Secretary, Department of Trade and Industry)*
62. **Corazon Juliano-Soliman** *(Former Secretary, DSWD)*
63. **Hector Soliman** *(Former USec., Department of Agrarian Reform)*
64. **Mario Taguiwalo** *(Former USec., Department of Health)*
65. **Jaime Galvez Tan** *(Former Secretary, Department of Health)*
66. **Wigberto Tañada** *(Former Commissioner, Bureau of Customs)*
67. **Rene Villa** *(Former Secretary, Department of Agrarian Reform)*
68. **Veronica Villavicencio** *(Former Lead Convenor, National Anti-Poverty Commission)*
69. **Deogracias Vistan** *(Former President, Land Bank of the Philippines)*



Lanao pact affirms no 'Balikatan' guns

NEWSBRIEFS

■ BUTUAN CITY

Poll protest case pits brother vs brother

■ TAGUM CITY

NPA rebels raid village, take guns

■ LOCAL AFFAIRS

Healing Mass in Iloilo

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

A paradise for historians, genealogists

Dagupan City

THE PLACE IS DARK AND DANK. Books on open shelves, some of them leather-bound, are old, their pages yellowed by age. Silverworms (insects that feed on book paper and glue) crawl in between some leaves.

People may not find this nook at the Archbishop's Palace in Dagupan an ideal place to spend a lazy afternoon



Oldest

Fair or poor

Pampanga 'school of life' celebrates its centennial

City of San Fernando

WHEELCHAIR-BOUND Bernardita Baluyut, 99, returned to the Pampanga High School (PHS) in the City of San Fernando on Feb. 11. So did thousands of alumni from all over the country and many corners of the world, wearing the school color of golden yellow.



THE PAMPANGA High School's 1908 building.

Gabaldon type

American legacy

NEWS

Troops dig up alleged remains of Bali bomber

PATIKUL, SULU—THE MILITARY HAS EXHUMED WHAT IT BElieves to be the remains of Dulmatin, also known as Ammar Usman, an Indonesian militant wanted for the 2002 Bali bombings that killed over 200 people.

Sandigan orders sheriff to run after new Jose Velarde account

2 RP films win in Berlin

Aplus METRO

DID YOU KNOW

Murder raps filed vs Abra's Valera

TWO COUNTS EACH OF MURDER AND FRUSTRATED murder were filed by the police yesterday in the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office against former Abra Gov. Vicente Valera and seven other men for the killing of Rep. Luis Bersamin Jr. in 2006.



NOT-SO-SECRET HIDING PLACE

Life sentence for killer of Malabon photojournalist



Business execs accuse partners of fraud

MetroBriefs

Landfill reopens temporarily

The WORLD

Musharraf's allies concede poll defeat

ISLAMABAD—PAKISTANI PRESIDENT PERVEZ Musharraf's political allies conceded defeat Tuesday after elections, leaving the party of slain opposition leader Benazir Bhutto and other opponents headed for victory.

Clinton, Obama square off in Wisconsin



GIANT SEA CREATURES

Documents on JFK shooting unveiled

WorldBriefs

Suicide bomber kills 37 in Afghanistan

Plan to assassinate Aussie premier bared

Germany swoops on 700 suspects in tax fraud

US to shoot down spy satellite

WHAT'S INSIDE
- Garnett still MVP favorite A32



SPORTS

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Ochoa

Giants bent on derailing hot, hot Realtors tonight



WILLIAMS: Shining performance

Gregorio out to avert 4th-quarter meltdown

By Musong R. Castillo

SMART-PBA PHILIPPINE CUP
GAME TODAY
Araneta Coliseum
7 p.m. — Purefoods vs Sta. Lucia



RP Youth five dreams big

THESE DAYS, IT'S HARDLY ANY FILIPINO KID'S BASketball dream.

POC to add 2 ex-Olympians in its fold

Not as easy as oddsmakers say

BARE EYE



Giants bent on derailing...

PBA sets TV bidding guidelines

Puentevella eyeing POC top post, too



Top favorites clash in PBL inaugurals

Moscow chessfest: Sadorra falls, Gomez salvages draw

Beach volley holding camp

SPORTSWATCH

SPORTS



Peer jots down a historical milestone

Garnett still MVP favorite

Modest numbers hide KG's value to Celtics



Sampras wins exhibition match vs Haas

Holmes glad to be 'sacrificial lamb'

Konica golf tourney stakes cars for hole-in-one feats

Bayron enters Volvo China Open qualifier



BAYRON

IN THIS ISSUE

BUSINESS

ICCP Group 20th Year

Tourism receipts jumped 24% to $394M

CURRENCIES



STOCK MARKET

Shares close 0.9% higher



DOT says Koreans still top visitors in January

TOURISM RECEIPTS ROSE 24.2 PERCENT TO $394.04 million in January from $317.19 million in the same month last year following continued efforts of the Department of Tourism to further boost the sector.

BANKERS' VIEW

Economy getting detached from politics

Semirara diversifies into mining, power

By Daxim L. Lucas

COAL PRODUCER Semirara Mining Corp., a unit of the DMCI Holdings group, yesterday formalized its entry into nickel mining and power generation with its board approving investments into sister firms engaged in these businesses.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), Semirara said its board of directors has given the green light to a P100-million investment in DMCI Mining Corp. by subscribing to an equal interest of the firm's equity.

DMCI Mining is the contractor for a mining claim in Sta. Cruz, Zambales, under a mineral production sharing agreement in the name of Zambales Mineral Resources Corp.

DMCI Mining is capitalized at P80 million, with 50 percent of this held by its parent, DMCI Holdings. The investment will make Semirara and DMCI Holdings 50-50 partners in the mining firm, with its authorized capital stock eventually rising to P500 million.

In its letter to the stock exchange, Semirara also said that it would subscribe to P115 million worth of new shares in DMCI Power Corp., which is also a unit of DMCI Holdings.

Like its mining sister firm, the power generation unit is also capitalized at P80 million, with its authorized capital stock to be raised to P1 billion after Semirara's entry.

The resulting firm would also be a 50-50 joint venture company between Semirara and DMCI Holdings.

To date, the company has two major power generation projects: the 100-megawatt coal-fired power generation plant in Concepcion, Iloilo, and a 15-megawatt coal-fired power plant in Masbate. These projects are under DMCI Concepcion Power Corp. and DMCI Masbate Power Corp., respectively.

Lepanto to raise ₱1B from rights offer

PUBLICLY LISTED Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. will raise P1 billion through a stock rights offer to pay off debt to banks and suppliers, the company said yesterday.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Lepanto said it is expected to raise P1.04 billion "more or less" from the capital-raising exercise.

Lepanto's board approved the scheme, which would give shareholders the right to subscribe to one common share of the company at 20 centavos for every seven they presently hold.

The firm has yet to announce the record and offer dates for the stock rights exercise.

Lepanto is a P8 [illegible]

LEPANTO, B3

Philippine Stock Exchange

As of February 19, 2008

[illegible]

Exchange Rates

February 19, 2008 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Japan	Yen	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
United Kingdom	Pound	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Hong Kong	Dollar	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Switzerland	Franc	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Canada	Dollar	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Singapore	Dollar	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Australia	Dollar	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Bahrain	Dinar	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Saudi Arabia	Rial	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Brunei	Dollar	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Indonesia	Rupiah	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Thailand	Baht	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
UAE	Dirham	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
EU	Euro	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Korea	Won	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
China	Yuan	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Denmark	Kroner	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
India	Rupee	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Malaysia	Ringgit	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
New Zealand	Dollar	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Norway	Kroner	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Taiwan	NT Dollar	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]

Excise tax collection down to ₱42.16B in '07

Drop in cigarette tax take ate up gains from alcoholic beverages sector





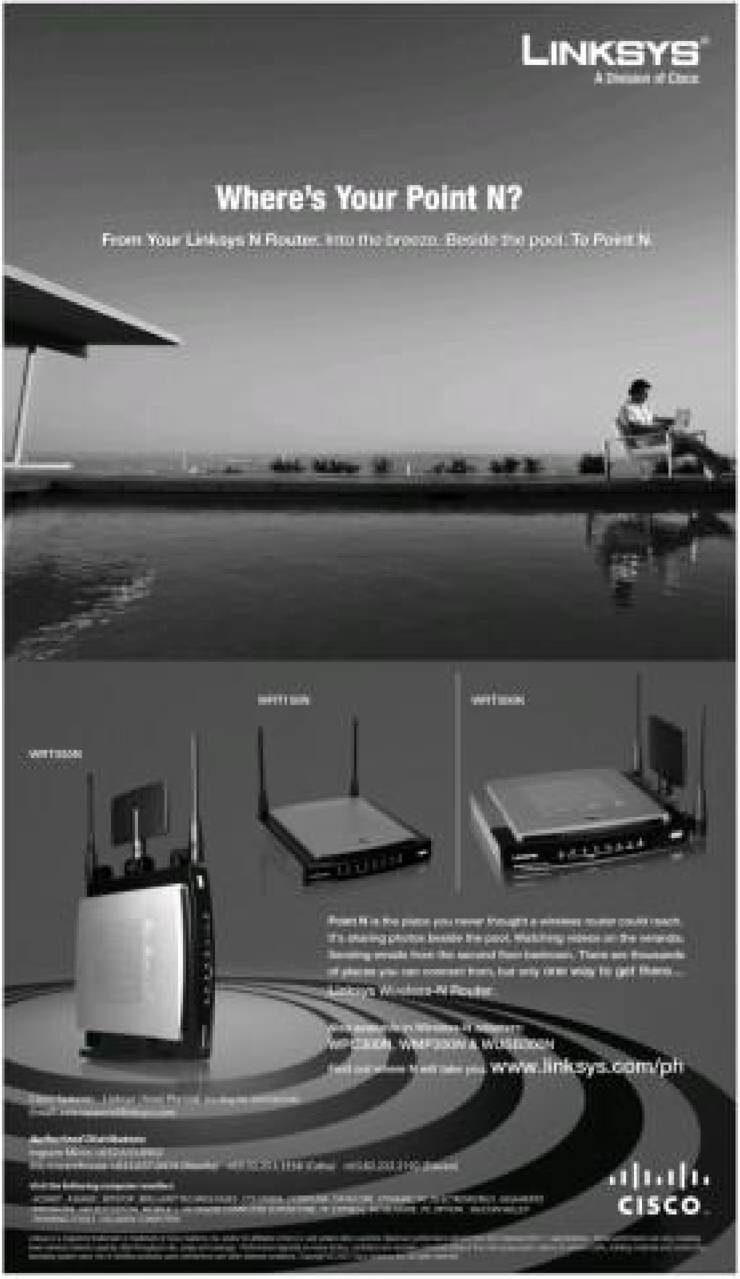
IPVG to acquire 70% stake in MegaMobile

NLEX toll fees set for adjustment next January

ERC draft rules on meter deposit refund up for hearing

By Abigail L. Ho

Toshiba may get Nasulo deal



Peso crawls up

Tourism ...

From page B1

Economy ...

From page B1

Commissions

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES



Bernardo C. Gutierrez

Lepanto ...





HSBC bullish on RP, expects 6% GDP growth

By Doris C. Dumlao

BRITISH BANKING GIANT HSBC is upbeat on the Philippines, expecting the domestic economy to grow by over 6 percent this year despite the US-led global slowdown and political noise on the domestic front.

Mark Watkinson, country CEO of HSBC, also said in a briefing yesterday that HSBC would open in two weeks' time the bank's second business process outsourcing (BPO) hub in the Philippines in Commonwealth, Quezon City, which would employ about 3,000.

"I've said in many occasions that I remain very bullish about the Philippines. I think 2008 offers a lot of opportunities and HSBC remains committed," he said.

Watkinson noted that the bank has a staff of 2,000 and the head count for its two BPO centers was nearing the 7,000 mark.

The bank's BPO unit in the Philippines, HSBC Electronic Data Processing (Philippines) Inc., is a global service center catering exclusively to HSBC customers worldwide.

Its first BPO hub is in Filinvest Corner, Alabang.

"So far as the economy's potential is concerned, my view is we're going to see a growth in numbers. The BPO industry is going to continue to grow and with the remittances, even with the [illegible] exchange rate, it is still going to be sticky and will continue, and all that will lead to an overall positive impact," Watkinson said when asked whether he thought the ongoing political disturbance in the country would spoil business.

"So on the economic front, I'm looking at north of 6-percent growth in GDP (gross domestic product) and I think that puts the Philippines in a pretty positive position," he said.

GDP, which refers to the value of all goods and services produced by the domestic economy, is deemed as the single most important indicator of economic performance.

Although slower than last year's 7.3-percent GDP growth, the best performance in 31 years, HSBC's forecast is favorable given expectations that the US economy may fall into a recession this year.

The Philippine economy is affected by developments in the United States as it is the country's leading trading partner and a major source of investments.

The government, for its part, is targeting a GDP growth of 6.3-7 percent this year.

In the first half of this year, Watkinson said HSBC would open new branches in Rockwell, Mall of Asia, San Fernando in Pampanga, SM Paranaque and Quezon City.

"A lot of these are existing branches that we have relocated. Then in the second half of the year, we're looking for new locations," he said.

Thoughts on federalism

MINDANAWORLD



Ayi Bagare Hizon

LET ME JOIN THE GROUPS OF Mindanaoans who welcome the election of Davao City First District Rep. Prospero Nograles as Speaker. It is high time for a son of Mindanao to get the fourth highest position in the Philippine government. Being the fourth top official of the country, he has the power and the connections to hasten the development of Mindanao.

We also believe that the election of Speaker Nograles comes at a most opportune time considering that Mindanao's peace negotiations are likely to lead to an agreement.

His election may even hasten the peace negotiations because he has the power to rally at least the House of Representatives into approving bills that will breathe life to the peace agreement.

Talking about power, the Speaker, the titular head of the House of Representatives, has enough persuasive authority to push for federalism, which to most of people of Mindanao will help shape the peace agreement.

I join Kusog Mindanaw's Rey Magno Teves in urging the Speaker to push for the approval of federalism so that such the forging of a peace agreement with the Moro groups.

Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza, in an earlier statement, even proposed that Congress amend the Constitution to specifically address the proposed peace agreement with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front. Secretary Dureza knows whereof he speaks considering that at one time, he was the chief negotiator for the government.

The business sector in Mindanao believes that Speaker Nograles can rally the Lower House and that many of the congressmen from Mindanao are willing to support the proposal to amend the Constitution for the purpose of coming up with federal states to address the decades-old Mindanao conflict.

I hope these legislators, with the leadership of the Speaker, will cross party lines and come up with a solution to the Mindanao conflict by opening the discussion on federalism and, if they find it viable, come up with a law that will make this a reality.

We believe that with the Speaker at the helm of the House of Representatives, the heterogeneous body of legislators will be able to help Mindanao overcome one of the biggest obstacles to its development, the armed conflict.

I believe the Speaker and the rest of the legislators, no matter what their political colors are, will be able to use their legislative powers to come up with the best solution that will help shape Mindanao's not too distant future.

It is high time that the Speaker and the rest of the people of Mindanao join hands and seize the opportunity for Mindanao to have the peace that has long eluded it.

* * *

The Technical Vocational Schools of Zamboanga City in Western Mindanao will hold its annual conference on Feb. 27-28, 2008 in Zamboanga City. Upgrading the quality of delivery of technical skills is a priority in the Mindanao Human Resource Agenda. I see this as a significant move and initiative headed by the Region 9 Association of TVET Institutions and Zamboanga City Association of Private Tech-Voc Schools presidency, Marycel Enriquez of Mint College. All private TVET, business and labor groups in that region should attend this conference.

(*Ayi Bagare Hizon is an advocate for the development of the island. She is chair of Ayi Bagare Foundation, Phil. Call Centers Affairs, Mindanao Tech-Voc Schools Association, Mindanao Rep. Export Development Council. E-mail comments: [illegible]@yahoo.com.*)

DA to host national food summit

MONITORING STATE SUBSIDIES

Tighter watch on GOCC spending sought

Fisheries bureau to fund vital seaweed nurseries



Pag-IBIG establishes online ties with BPI

MOTORING

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

'Casa' sob stories

By Tessa R. Salazar

INQUIRER MOTORING receives letters and phone calls from readers relating their casa (manufacturers' service center) horror stories from time to time. Usually, it's the complainants' word against the car manufacturers. In the hope that our motoring public (and other car manufacturers, as well) would pick up a few lessons from these "sob stories," we will be printing them—sans real name and company name of the parties involved, of course.

The aberrant alternator

[illegible]

Hot under the hood

[illegible]



To Z is to dream

[illegible]

MY DRIFT



Andre Fidona

[illegible]

Powerful piece

[illegible]



BMW Z4 Coupe



[illegible]

Road feel

[illegible]

ERICSSON COUNTRY MANAGER TESTS THE PRIUS

Ericsson Philippines Country Manager Raj Pangnolar recently road-tested the state-of-the-art, hybrid vehicle Toyota Prius. Powered by a combination of electric and conventional internal combustion engines, the Prius can use either its engine or battery or both to accelerate. Pangnolar is one of the prominent corporate personalities invited by Toyota Motors Philippines Corp. (TMP) to test-drive the fuel-efficient and environment-friendly Toyota Prius in the Philippines. The road test is in keeping with the corporate social responsibility initiatives of both Ericsson Philippines and TMP to prevent pollution and protect the natural environment.



To Z is to dream

From page B2-1

having much to do with the suspension setting and the choice of runflat tires, may not appeal to all. Road feel is undeniably present, bumps and imperfections on the road are constantly relayed to the driver. In moments of spirited driving, such feedback is critical but driving lazily around the less than perfect streets of Manila can become a bit tiring.

After all that has been said, the BMW Z4 Coupé is really made for moments that the striking design and the respectable dynamics can be used to their fullest. Easily nine out of 10 times that we use a car, we wish we had something a little smaller, a whole lot more fuel efficient and something that just more in anonymity.

There are those few times that we need cars that can live up to the demands of both traveling and arriving. If only life were a series of everyday out of town parties at country clubs nestled in the mountains, surrounded by ribbons of undulating, twisty tarmac. If that's what your monthly calendar looks like, then by all means the Z4 Coupé makes a wonderful candidate to add to your personal stable of cars. Those of us have more mundane things to do, well—we can dream, can't we?

TORQUE: A BMW Xpo Driving Experience Enjoyment, Excitement, Exhilaration





NISSAN GTR





BMW X6

'Biofuels alone are not the silver bullet' for the world's energy or environmental problems

Fuel efficiency, not just biofuels

ON THE ROAD



Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

Blamed

Gas hogs

Fat profits

More importance

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Drive like hell—you'll get there!

F-150





MOTORING

Editor Cesar D. Manguerang



CIVIC

Civic, CR-V buyers buck car sales trend, reinforce Honda's 2nd spot

THEY SAY THE BEST MEA-sure of a product or service's quality is its ability to thrive even when its competitors are having a tough time.

Positive sales trend

Experiences sales slump

TRANSPORT TRIVIA

Of oil change and sludge

Black Death



SAMPLE sludge buildup

Lifestyle



How to wear your own age at the prom

Don't commit the mistake of looking older than you are







PURPLE hooded gown, Eric de los Santos (0920-9264042)

How to wear . . .

[illegible]

Melissa Shoes or www.melissaphilippines.com.

Ask your makeup artist to make you look young and fresh; it is not the time to pile on heavy layers of foundation. Good for the folks. After all, you won't need lots of foundation unless you have problem skin (like blemishes or acne scars), so make sure you communicate with your makeup artist. Try to do research on the makeup which promises work as well, so you know what to expect. After all, you wouldn't want to get to the prom looking like a kabuki actor.

When having makeup done, make sure the colors used will complement (and not match) your dress. If you're wearing a purple gown, stay away from eggplant or plum shadows, and wear instead light pink, silver and gold hues, depending on your skin tone.

You can use red lipstick if you really want to, but be warned: it can look too strong for your age, so use in moderation. Smoky eyes are also glamorous, but without the proper attitude needed to carry such a strong look, you'll only end up looking like a raccoon.

Makeup looks to check out this season are Shu Uemura's Remix collection, Lancome L.U.C.I. Spring/Summer 2008, L'Oreal Mineral Makeup, Smashbox Screenwerk and Kanebo Coffret D'Or. The shades for the season include lime green, yellow, turquoise, frosty blue and baby pink—perfect for the prom season.



OLIVE satin gown with chiffon accent, Kashmaire



YELLOW-ORANGE corset and ball skirt, Cinderella



WHITE strapless dress, Cinderella



PINK dress with colours, Eric de los Santos

We particularly like Shu Uemura's shades this season: lime green, orange, and periwinkle will definitely make your eyes pop without looking over the top. The star product, the Tri-Color Eye Match, has two variants: Energy Flow (yellow, white, orange) and Aqua Flow (light blue, gray green).

Lancome's L.U.C.I. collection is also inspired by light, airy shades. The collection uses iridescent bright colors (such as shimmery aqua and lilac) enhanced with a silvery base. Our top pick? The shimmery white Face Powder, which you can use to highlight your shoulders (great for catching the light from the mirrorball at the prom!).

Smashbox Screenwerk, on the other hand, is less ethereal and more earthy. It has two bronzers and two sets of eye shadow in nature-inspired colors, great for morenas who want to enhance their tanned skin.

Want to look like a Japanese pop star? Check out Kanebo's Coffret D'Or, a collection that will surely appeal to those who want to highlight their pale, luminous skin. The collection has several sets of sparkly eye shadow that would look great in a dimly lit ballroom.

Styled by Bianca Consunji
Makeup by Toni Ying of Lancome using L.U.C.I. Spring/Summer 2008 collection
Photo/Shoot by el Barros
Models [illegible]
Shot at the Clark Hot Air Balloon Festival
Special thanks to [illegible]



PURPLE gown with ruffles, Cinderella



SHU Uemura Refresh collection: very young and fresh colors.





SMASHBOX Screenwerk and, below, Lancome L.U.C.I. collections



EVEN if you dance the whole night, L'Oreal Mineral Makeup will not budge. At right, Kanebo Coffret D'Or.



The prom date's worst nightmare

By Bianca Consunji
2bU Correspondent

> I stuck out my hand, smiled and introduced myself. 'Hi, I'm Bianca, Nikka's sister. Fear me'



WHEN NIKKA, my younger sister, first told me a few years ago that she was going to attend the prom of an all-boys' high school, my mind blanked out.

[illegible]

Bundle of nerves

[illegible]

Oh, brother

[illegible]







Eager debutantes get ready for ball









2BU! SURVEY

What's the most memorable prom you've attended?



Meet Colbie Caillat

By Marlowe David Baustos

After her songs became the most in-demand tunes in MySpace, record producers simply had to take notice

Love in the time of Friendster

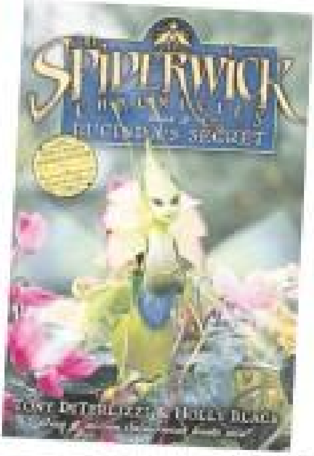
By Ruth L. Manere

One of the telling signs that relationships nowadays have gone digital is through the little detail at the beginning of online profiles

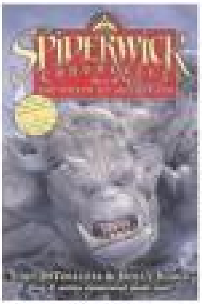
Fairy trail

By Ruel S. De Vera

The five books of 'The Spiderwick Chronicles' offer a beguiling interaction for readers interested in a magical time, regardless of age and movie or no movie







HUNDREDS ZEROED ON COKE ZERO D-DAY



A Toast to Coke Zero.

It was a day that pulsated with brimming anticipation. A day inundated with breathtaking awe and countless surprises. It was the day when Coca-Cola again made history, the day when Coke Zero landed on Philippine soil.

Coke Zero is Coca-Cola's biggest product launch in more than two decades. Coke Zero is about giving consumers a choice – the Coca-Cola taste they love, with or without sugar.

The beverage, tagged "A Coke Exactly Like Coke with Zero Sugar," is a celebration of things that go beyond the limits of convention, things that are out of the ordinary. Coke Zero possesses a personality which has already zeroed in on the palates of millions around the world.



Real Coke Taste. Zero Sugar.



Looking for the big surprise.

On February 13, 2008, it was the turn of Filipinos to get zeroed by this biggest and newest addition to the Coke arsenal. Hundreds of guests from the media, trade partners and those from the fields of technology, sports and the arts, flocked to the Bonifacio Global City Commons Facility where they expected to attend another regular product launch. Instead, the attendees were treated to something truly remarkable, something that goes way beyond the usual.

As the guests were enjoying the height of a lovely cocktail party, 30 men, masked and clad all in black, stormed through the foyer. The Zero Men, as the black-arrayed men were called, escorted everyone out of the venue and into the coasters waiting outside, all to the guests' surprise and confusion.



Zero Men.



A low landing!

The guests were driven off to the nearby Bonifacio Global City Helipad, also known as Ground Zero. There they witnessed what has to be one of the most astonishing and surprising production number ever produced. The crowd assembled in the bleachers broke into a tumultuous applause when a helicopter unexpectedly arrived to unload a giant Coke Zero bottle. At last, the identity of Coca-Cola's biggest surprise was finally revealed.

The string of surprises continued when some of the Zero Men came toward the giant bottle to perform a Brazilian capoeira dance number, which was accompanied by an unconventional, symphonic mix of capoeira drumbeats and contemporary rock music.

Formally introducing Coke Zero to the honored guests were **Mr. Kandy Anand, President, Philippines Business Unit, Coca-Cola, and Mr. David Lyons, Chief Executive Officer of Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines**, who both surprised the press people and Coca-Cola's trade partners when they revealed themselves as the men behind the two Zero Men Big Bosses, who were masked and clothed in imposing trench coats.



Striking a Coke Zero pose.

The event was hosted by MTV VJ extraordinaire **Jonathan "Sib" Sibala**, whose personality, a clever mix of the quirky and the witty, easily won the crowd. And true to Coke Zero's edgy, unconventional character, the event was also graced by the stimulating sounds of the pop-punk rock group **Chicosci** and the indie band **Up Dharma Down**.

Garnishing the remarkably exciting show were performances from street magicians, who seemed to just pop out of nowhere to entertain unsuspecting guests with their magical flair. Catching groups of audiences unaware with what is known as guerilla-style magic or close-up magic acts, the street magicians left the guests astonished with their unbelievable and totally radical tricks involving sleight-of-hand and feats of mentalism.

Another event surprise was the "You Got Zeroed Game." Guests tried to outdo one another by doing their coolest and wackiest "You Got Zeroed" poses inside the Coke Zero Photo Booth, to be one of the winners of the 10 iPod Touch.



Radical magic.

The launch of Coke Zero is expected to create a sensation that will ripple throughout the country. Within the next few months, Coke Zero is set to instigate more surprises that are sure to get more and more Filipinos zeroed by the millions. It promises to create a stir in everybody's lifestyle in a manner never before experienced by anyone.

The Coke Exactly Like Coke with Zero Sugar is finally zeroing in on everyone, everywhere. Prepare to get zeroed yourself!



All for Coke Zero.

LIFESTYLE



MENTOR Tim Gunn and host-judge Heidi Klum

Share in the excitement by tuning in next week to Discovery Channel's 'Project Runway'

Fab show for the fashionista





Password

Serena Mosinger Dalb

DISCOVERY CHANNEL is one of my favorite networks. It has interesting and intelligent programs. I love watching Animal Planet, cooking shows, travel documentaries and the recent rage, reality contests.

Recently I previewed the season premiere of "Project Runway," a reality show where 15 aspiring designers get the chance to show off his or her fashion creations on television. After a series of competitions and eliminations, the final winner gets to exhibit his or her collection during the prestigious New York Fashion week held in Bryant Park.

He or she will also get $100,000 seed money from TRESemmé to jumpstart the collection, plus an exclusive spread in Elle Magazine and the opportunity to sell the fashion line in bluefly.com. Bluefly is "the ultimate hookup for the fashion obsessed" and represents ultra chic designers such as Fendi, Chloé, [illegible]. The final sweetener in the winner's package is the key to a 2008 Saturn Aura.

"Project Runway" is hosted by supermodel Heidi Klum and presided over by a panel of judges that includes Elle Magazine's fashion director Nina Garcia, American designer Michael Kors and a special guest panelist, typically a hot new fashion designer.

The guest judge on Episode 1 of Season 4 was none other than Filipino designer Monique Lhuillier. I was very excited and proud to see a fellow countrywoman get acknowledged in international media as a major creative talent.

The guest judges decide "who's in and who's out." It is interesting to observe their comments and the different criteria they use to decide which candidate to eliminate and which to continue encouraging.

Aside from skill, the other areas the judges consider include color sense, consistency of style, draping, originality, fashion flair and an eye for the dramatic.

Distinct tastes

All the aspiring designers are creative and possess distinct tastes and personalities.

In their initial interviews, some came off nervous, manic and so touched by the unbelievable opportunity they'd been given that they shed tears.

Some of their initial creations turned out to be quirky, some looked conservative, earthy and casual while others had flounces and frills. One contestant even designed a costume made to resemble salad leaves.

PAGE D3



FASHION creations on "Project Runway"

A drama novel by CARLO J. CAPARAS

To have and to hold

Art: ARNEL A. AVETRIA



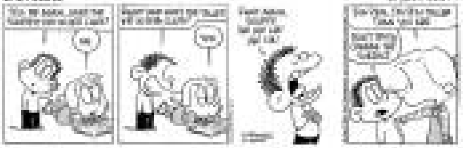


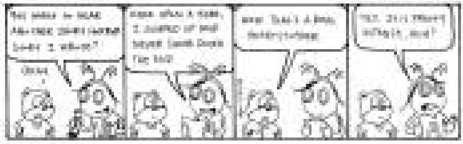


GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

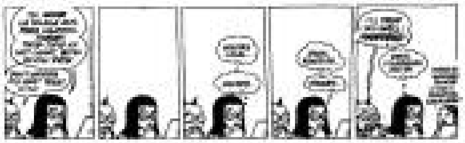


BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

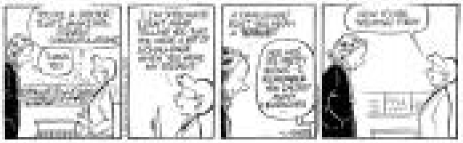




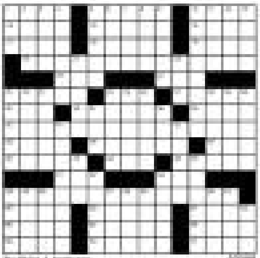


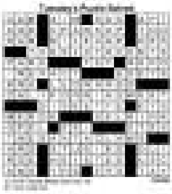


BEN — BY DANIEL SHELTON



DAILY CROSSWORD





HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku

				9				
	3		2		4			
	8	7				9		
	6						1	
9								5
5	1					3	7	4
	2		4	7			8	
	7		3	6			9	
	9	6	1	8	2	5	4	

Difficulty Level ★★★

HOW TO PLAY SUDOKU

Answer to previous puzzle

Fab show ...



High drama











Kissfest

Lovapalooza hasn't lost that lovin' feeling

Text and photos by Oliver M. Pulumbarit

THIS YEAR'S CLOSEUP Lovapalooza Frost Fest event, held last Feb. 12 at the NBC Tent, was a scaled-down version of the yearly Valentine's Day party, where many Filipino couples previously gathered in one venue to break synchronized kissing records. The annual tradition, which started in 2004, is still a grand celebration, but the more contained and theme-focused revelries made the affair just as intimate and romantic as previous ones.

The affair certainly hadn't lost that Lovapalooza feeling. The number of couples was narrowed down to a hundred, and getting into the exclusive party required participants to win in the photo contest, where the sweetest pics of kissing lovers were picked.

Among the thousands of entries received, the chosen few found themselves enjoying exclusive Lovapalooza treats, giveaways and prizes. Closeup gave each couple a specially crafted, diamond-studded necklace called Crystal Frost, also the name of the newest toothpaste variant launched that evening.

That "icy cool" Closeup product lent the theme to the occasion, as the NBC Tent was aptly refurbished to simulate a breezy winter wonderland effect.

Air conditioners and portable cooling equipment were on full blast. Blued lights and shimmering décor helped create the enchanting atmosphere that the Frost Fest needed. Upon entering the venue, most of the attendees just had to cuddle up. Occasional blasts of confetti, mist and "snow" helped enhance the motif of the evening, as well.

Hale

The program was hosted by Tim Yap and Sam Oh, and featured local performers such as Barbie Almalbis, Rivermaya and Hale. Almalbis did an upbeat version of the classic Closeup jingle, "Just a Smile Away," while some winning kiss pics were shown. Hale performed the latest jingle, "Wishing."

Rivermaya movingly played the classic love ballad, "214," as the lucky lovebirds put on their valuable jewelry gifts. Massive smooching ensued.

During breaks between performances, guests got to view romantic footage, such as snippets from decades-old Closeup TV commercials and popular romantic movie comedies, accompanied by Dashboard Confessional's "Stolen."

Marc Abaya, Bubbo Marasigan, Kian Magdangal, Sheree Bautista, Sam Alonzo, Sitti Ebcasy, BJ Ledesma, Kim Chiu, Gerald Anderson, Brad Turvey, Ehyrest Ortaliza and Bailey Valverio were among the celebrity attendees. Taguig City Mayor Freddie Tinga also made an appearance.

The charmingly chilly Lovapalooza Frost Fest was a fun place to be. It was interesting, not to mention educational, to see lovers getting cozy on cue and having a different Valentine's date.

Next year, maybe old people and gay and lesbian couples can be more active in sending various images of the Lovapalooza to come more inclusive and broke traditional barriers. Now that's definitely going to be a celebration of love.

ENTERTAINMENT

Berlinale award for RP movie

By Marinel R. Cruz

[illegible]



BRILLANTE Mendoza, right, and Coco Martin

Bloody winners

[illegible]

Survey: Viewers love-struck in '07

[illegible]

Top three

[illegible]

Ad support

[illegible]

Portable film fest

[illegible]



WINNING FORM

[illegible]



Phillip shields bickering couple Gretchen, Tonyboy from paparazzi

DOLLY WOOD
Dolly Anne Carvajal



Surprise treat



GENEVA Cruz, left, and Rachel Alejandro

Preggy role



Maxene Quinto

'Mockumentary'

Mabini show



Fun, guilt-free

'BFGF' has class-crossing appeal

By Jason B. Orlando
Contributor

Attention to detail

A few bumps

CINEMA ACCESS: 635-5555

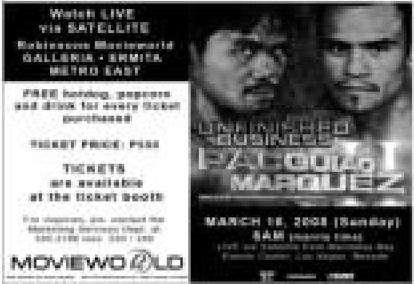
MOVIEWORLD

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

GALLERIA

1 JUMPER • THX
2 LIHIM ni ANTONIO
3 THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES
4 P2
5 MY BEST FRIEND's GIRLFRIEND
6 VANTAGE POINT
7 ASSASINATION OF JESSE JAMES
8 IndieSine: DAYBREAK
9 BLONDE AMBITION
10 UNTRACEABLE



ERMITA

1 THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES
2 JUMPER
3 THE MIST
4 BLONDE AMBITION
5 ASSASINATION of JESSE JAMES
6 MY BEST FRIEND's GIRLFRIEND
7 UNTRACEABLE
1 P2
2 THE EYE
3 VANTAGE POINT

METRO EAST

1 JUMPER
2 MY BEST FRIEND's GIRLFRIEND
3 VANTAGE POINT
4 SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES
5 UNTRACEABLE
6 P2
7 BLONDE AMBITION
8 THE EYE / THE MIST

NOVALICHES

1 MY BEST FRIEND's GIRLFRIEND
2 VANTAGE POINT
3 JUMPER
4 THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES

PIONEER

1 ASSASINATION OF JESSE JAMES
2 VANTAGE POINT
3 P2
4 UNTRACEABLE

STA. ROSA

1 JUMPER
2 MY BEST FRIEND's GIRLFRIEND
3 VANTAGE POINT
4 SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES

LIPA

1 JUMPER
2 MY BEST FRIEND's GIRLFRIEND
3 THE EYE
4 ALIENS vs. PREDATOR 2

DASMARIÑAS

1 VANTAGE POINT
2 JUMPER
3 MY BEST FRIEND's GIRLFRIEND
4 THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES

IMUS

1 MY BEST FRIEND's GIRLFRIEND
2 THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES
3 JUMPER
4 VANTAGE POINT

ANGELES

1 JUMPER
2 MY BEST FRIEND's GIRLFRIEND
3 VANTAGE POINT
4 ONE MISSED CALL

TARLAC

1 MY BESTFRIEND's GIRLFRIEND
2 THE EYE
3 ONE MISSED CALL

STARMILLS

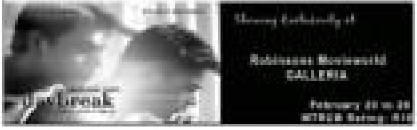
1 VANTAGE POINT
2 MY BEST FRIEND's GIRLFRIEND
3 ONE MISSED CALL
4 IN THE NAME OF THE KING
5 JUMPER
6 MY BROTHERS WIFE

BACOLOD

1 JUMPER
2 VANTAGE POINT
3 ONE MISSED CALL
4 THE EYE
5 MY BESTFRIEND's GIRLFRIEND
6 IN THE NAME OF THE KING

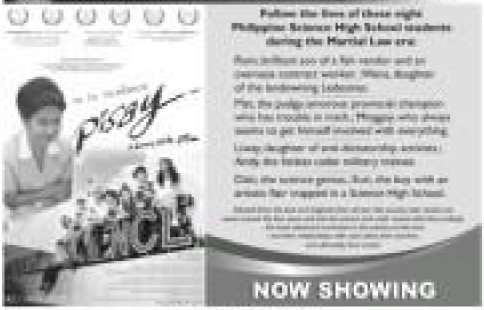
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1 VANTAGE POINT
2 THE MIST
3 MY BEST FRIEND's GIRLFRIEND
4 THE EYE
5 ONE MISSED CALL
6 JUMPER



SM Cinema movietime

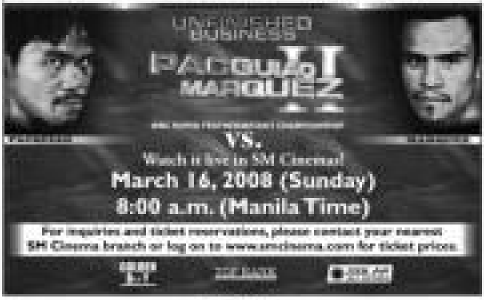
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METRO MANILA

IMAX

THE PODIUM



LUZON

VISAYAS - MINDANAO

Opening Today

The Assassination of Jesse James By the Coward Robert Ford

Stars Brad Pitt, Casey Affleck, Sam Shepard, Mary-Louise Parker, Paul Schneider

Directed by Andrew Dominik

Based on Ron Hansen's novel, this is a fictionalized retelling of the murder of a legendary outlaw (Pitt). Peter Travers of Rolling Stone wrote: "brilliantly exciting and compulsively watchable even at 160 minutes." Lisa Schwarzbaum of Entertainment Weekly hails it as "haunting ... emotional drama." [illegible] Matthew [illegible] of Film Threat describes it as "a surly" [illegible]



Over Her Dead Body

Stars Eva Longoria Parker, Paul Rudd, Jason Biggs, Lake Bell

Directed by Jeff Lowell

A [illegible] (Rudd) and a psychic (Bell) fall in love despite the presence of the ghost of his late wife. [illegible] of Los Angeles Times complains that the "screwball comedy ... is surprisingly uninspired." John Anderson of Washington Post agrees, noting "a good deal of flawed [illegible]." [illegible] of MSNBC.com points out: "[illegible] at least a few sporadic laughs."

Untraceable

Stars Diane Lane, Colin Hanks, Mary Beth Hurt, Dan Callahan

Directed by Gregory Hoblit

An FBI agent (Lane) goes after the psychic behind a website that streams a live video of people being tortured to death. Stephen Holden of New York Times calls it a "morally duplicitous torture porn ... a [illegible] thriller." Richard Corliss of Time [illegible] "[illegible] a movie [illegible] a moral message." Roger Ebert of Chicago Sun-Times [illegible] "[illegible] and [illegible]."

Blonde Ambition

Stars Jessica Simpson, Luke Wilson, Rachael Leigh Cook, Willie Nelson

Directed by Scott Marshall

Small-town girl (Simpson) moves to the Big Apple and gets embroiled in the schemes of two unscrupulous businessmen. Joe Leydon of Variety finds it "[illegible]." Edward Douglas of Films [illegible] dismisses it as a "waste of time and money."

P2

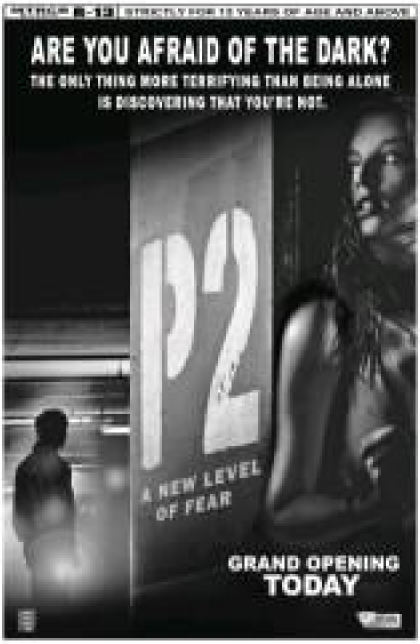
Stars Wes Bentley, Rachel Nichols, Simon Reynolds, Grace-Lynn Kung

Directed by Franck Khalfoun

Stranded in a parking lot, a young exec (Nichols) is stalked by an obsessed security guard (Bentley). [illegible] of FilmCritic.com: "[illegible]." [illegible] of [illegible] notes that the script "[illegible] and [illegible] (as it progresses)."













M M T A MOVIE GUIDE

NOW SHOWING



Opening Today



Daybreak

[illegible]

Pisay

[illegible]

Vantage Point

[illegible]

OPENING [illegible]



